

# Federal spending bill includes \$200 million for Paducah location

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The end-of-year budget bill heading for a final vote in Congress includes nearly \$200 million for Fiscal Year 2016 for the ongoing cleanup of the U.S. Department of Energy's Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant.

The \$199.9 million earmarked for decontamination and decommissioning of the former uranium enrichment operation represents about \$31 million more than President Barack Obama's \$168.6 million FY 2016 budget request. The budget for FY 2015 was \$207.2 million.

U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan announced an agreement Tuesday night on the massive bill between congressional leaders and the White House. The House is expected to vote on the final bill Friday with a Senate vote to follow.

Scott Darnell, president/CEO of Paducah Economic Development, which also oversees the Paducah Area Community Reuse Organization, praised the efforts of local and federal officials in pressing the need for continued adequate funding levels at the Paducah plant.

"The citizens of Paducah/McCracken County are blessed to have such a committed federal delegation representing them," Darnell said. "Senate Majority Leader (Mitch) McConnell, Sen. (Rand) Paul, and Congressman (Ed) Whitfield made additional funding and the commitment to this community/region a top priority in the federal budget process."

Darnell also praised the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce, the Citizens Advisory Board, Paducah Mayor Gayle Kaler and McCracken County Judge-Executive Bob Leeper for working together along with the federal delegation.

"That commitment is what has 1,600 employees working at the site (under DOE main contractor Fluor Federal Services and other contractors). The teamwork from the local to the federal level couldn't be better."